

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 031889

FOLLOWING REPEAT ABIDJAN 1182 FEB 4 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
ACCRA BRAZILIA LONDON MEXICO PARIS SANTO DOMINGO EC BRUSSELS USUN

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 1182

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, EAG, EGEN, US, XX

SUBJECT: US POSITION ON NEW COCOA AGREEMENT

REFERENCE STATE 12368

1. SUMMARY. DCM CALLED ON
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE SAWADOGO TO PRESENT STATEMENT ON COMMODITY
POLICY (REFTEL). SAWADOGO GRATIFIED BY STATEMENT, PARTICULARLY
SINCE HE HAD READ EXCERPTS FROM JANUARY 15 STATEMENT BY
TREASURY ASSISTANT SECRETARY PARSKY IMPLYING US DISINTEREST
IN COMMODITY AGREEMENTS. SAWADOGO SAID IT WAS ABSOLUTELY
NECESSARY FOR USG TO MAKE ITS POLICY ON COMMODITIES CLEAR
AT HIGH LEVEL, AND TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT CONVINCE PRODUCERS
AND CONSUMERS, ESPECIALLY FRANCE, OF SINCERITY OF US
READINESS TO SEEK AGREEMENT ON COCOA. HE SAID PRODUCERS,
ESPECIALLY GHANA AND NIGERIA, ARE DEEPLY SUSPICIOUS THAT USG
IS STALLING. END SUMMARY.

2. DCM AND ECON COUNSELOR CALLED ON SAWADOGO TO REITERATE
US INTEREST IN REOPENING COCOA NEGOTIATIONS TO PRODUCE
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ECONOMICALLY SOUND AGREEMENT AND TO PRESENT FRENCH TRANSLATION

OF JOINT STATE/TREASURY PRESS RELEASE OUTLINING US COMMODITY POLICY. SAWADOGO HAD SEEN EXTRACTS FROM ASST SECY PARSK'S STATEMENT, WHICH HE SAID COMPLICATED GOIC POSITION, AS IVORY COAST MAY NOW BE ACCUSED OF FOLLOWING US LEAD, WHEN IN FACT IT WAS AND IS PREPARED TO TAKE INDEPENDENT STAND.

3. SAWADOGO READ CAREFULLY STATEMENT OF US COMMODITY POLICY. HE WAS PLEASED AT PHRASING OF PARA 4-B WHICH DESCRIBES AGREEMENT AS DEFICIENT IN A NUMBER OF ASPECTS RATHER THAN TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE. HOWEVER, HE ASKED WHERE AND AT WHAT LEVEL, ESPECIALLY AMONG CONSUMING NATIONS, HAS SUGGESTION TO RENEGOTIATE BEEN MADE. HE STRESSED THAT NOW MORE THAN EVER, FOLLOWING THE PARSKY STATEMENT, IT WAS CRUCIAL THAT THE USG MAKE ITS POSITION ON COMMODITY POLICY ABSOLUTELY CLEAR. HE WOULD NOT PRESUME TO TELL THE USG WHERE, BUT HE MENTIONED THE ICCO IN LONDON, THE COMMODITIES COMMISSION IN PARIS, OR BILATERALLY TO PRODUCING AND CONSUMING NATIONS. SAWADOGO STATED THAT NOW WAS OPPORTUNE MOMENT FOR A FORMAL USG DEMARCHE ON REOPENING COCOA NEGOTIATIONS. GOIC ITSELF HAD RECENTLY MADE APPROACH TO FRANCE ASKING GOF TO RECONSIDER ITS POSITION ON NEW COCOA AGREEMENT. SAWADOGO SAID IT IS CRITICAL THAT USG DO ITS BEST TO CONVINCE CONSUMING NATIONS, ESPECIALLY FRANCE, THAT NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE REOPENED. SAWADOGO RETITERATED GOIC'S POSITION THAT AGREEMENT BEARS NO RELATIONSHIP TO REAL MARKET FORCES. SAWADOGO TOUCHED ON A PRODUCERS' MEETING IN BRAZIL IN LATE FEBRUARY PRIOR TO WHICH USG SHOULD SEIZE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE ITS POSITION CLEAR.

4. SAWADOGO SAID THERE WAS A GENUINE LACK OF CONFIDENCE AMONG AFRICAN NATIONS REGARDING USG INTENTIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE COCOA AGREEMENT. GHANA AND NIGERIA, IN PARTICULAR, ARE DEEPLY SUSPICIOUS THAT USG IS STALLING, AND UNWILLING ENDORSE PROMOTION CAMPAIGN FOR COCOA SINCE SOME US COMPANIES ARE SEEKING COCOA SUBSTITUTES. IVORY COAST HAS BEEN HARD PRESSED ON POLITICAL BASIS TO CHANGE ITS STAND IN SUPPORT OF AFRICAN, LDC AND PRODUCER SOLIDARITY.

5. CHARGE REITERATED TO SAWADOGO THAT USG STILL DEFINITELY WANTS TO REOPEN NEGOTIATIONS AND ACHIEVE WORKABLE AGREEMENT AND THAT HE WOULD CONVEY SAWADOGO'S VIEWS TO THE AMBASSADOR AND TO CONFIDENTIAL

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THE DEPARTMENT. SMITH
UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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